

## BOOK REVIEWS

## REVUES DE LIVRE

Carter GR, Cole JR, Jr., eds. **Diagnostic Procedures in Veterinary Bacteriology and Mycology** 5th ed. Academic Press Inc., San Diego. 1991. 620 pp. \$59.50

The fifth edition of this book, regarded by many as "the bible" of diagnostic veterinary bacteriology and mycology, is most welcome. During the 20 years since the first edition was published, the editors have sought to maintain the original purpose of the book. That was to provide a compilation of practical effective methods for diagnostic veterinary microbiology laboratories of all sizes, and to assist workers in keeping abreast of new procedures and recent developments in identification and antimicrobial susceptibility testing technologies.

Those familiar with previous editions will find, along with the change in publisher, improvements in text format and physical quality, new contributors, the deletion of one chapter and incorporation of another into a new chapter on rapid methods of identification, and a somewhat expanded context.

The four general introductory chapters will be particularly useful for small laboratories or individuals practising diagnostic veterinary microbiology at a basic level. This applies especially to four, on the isolation and identification of bacteria, which provides organisms commonly recovered from specific systems of different animal species and simplified guides to the presumptive recognition of common bacteria. The appendices are also convenient sources of essential techniques. Updates in nomenclature, for example, in *Pasteurella*, *Actinobacillus*, and *Streptococcus* species, noted in the appropriate chapters, will also be appreciated by all trying to maintain familiarity with veterinary pathogens.

While many contributors have done an excellent job of developing and updating their sections, I found some areas to be only adequate in this regard, examples being the chapter on *Micrococcus* and *Staphylococcus*, and the chapter on Nonsporeforming Anaerobic Bacteria. The new chapter on Rapid Methods of Identification was disappointing as it does not inform the reader of those systems that have actually been assessed for use or are already in use in veterinary diagnostic bacteriology. Rather, it only provides a con-

densed version of information already available in the Manual of Clinical Microbiology (1). Guidance on those systems and methods that might be of immediate practical value to veterinary diagnostic laboratories would have been more beneficial. A colleague with expertise in fish microbiology found the chapter on Diagnostic Approaches for Fish Disease to be quite deficient and misleading, not only in the general approaches recommended, such as methods for culture of organs and incubation of culture media, but also in many specific details.

In spite of these weaknesses and other numerous small errors that plague all multi-author texts, *Diagnostic Procedures in Veterinary Bacteriology and Mycology* is an important, practical reference text for veterinary diagnostic laboratories, practitioners, and veterinary students.

Perhaps the need to produce a comprehensive up-to-date reference text for veterinary diagnostic microbiology in a rapidly changing technological climate has become such that a radical change in traditional textbook publishing format is necessary. The development of a veterinary equivalent of the Manual of Clinical Microbiology (1) as a computer-generated text available on floppy disk or CD ROM with yearly or bi-annual updates and involving a much larger number of contributors should be pursued. In the meantime, I highly recommend the fifth edition of Carter and Cole's text, and at the same time express the hope that the authors will consider publication of the next edition in computer disk format.

### Reference

1. Lennette EH, Ballows A, Hausler WJ Jr., Shadomy HJ ed. *Manual of Clinical Microbiology*, 4th ed. American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC, 1985.

*Reviewed by C. Anne Muckle, DVM, MSc, PhD, New Hazards Laboratory, Health of Animals Laboratory Division, Agriculture Canada, 110 Stone Road West, Guelph, Ontario N1G 3W4*